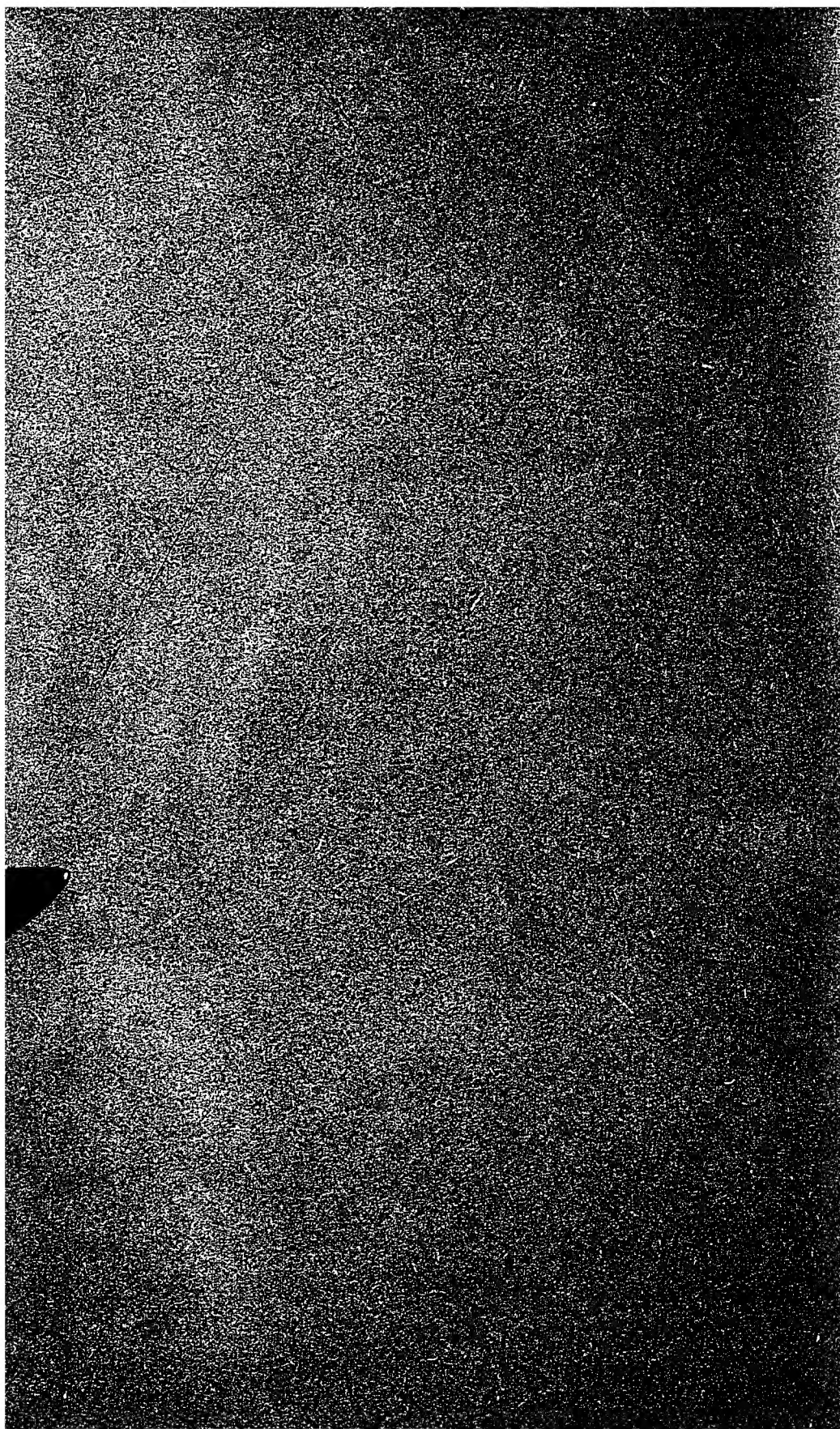
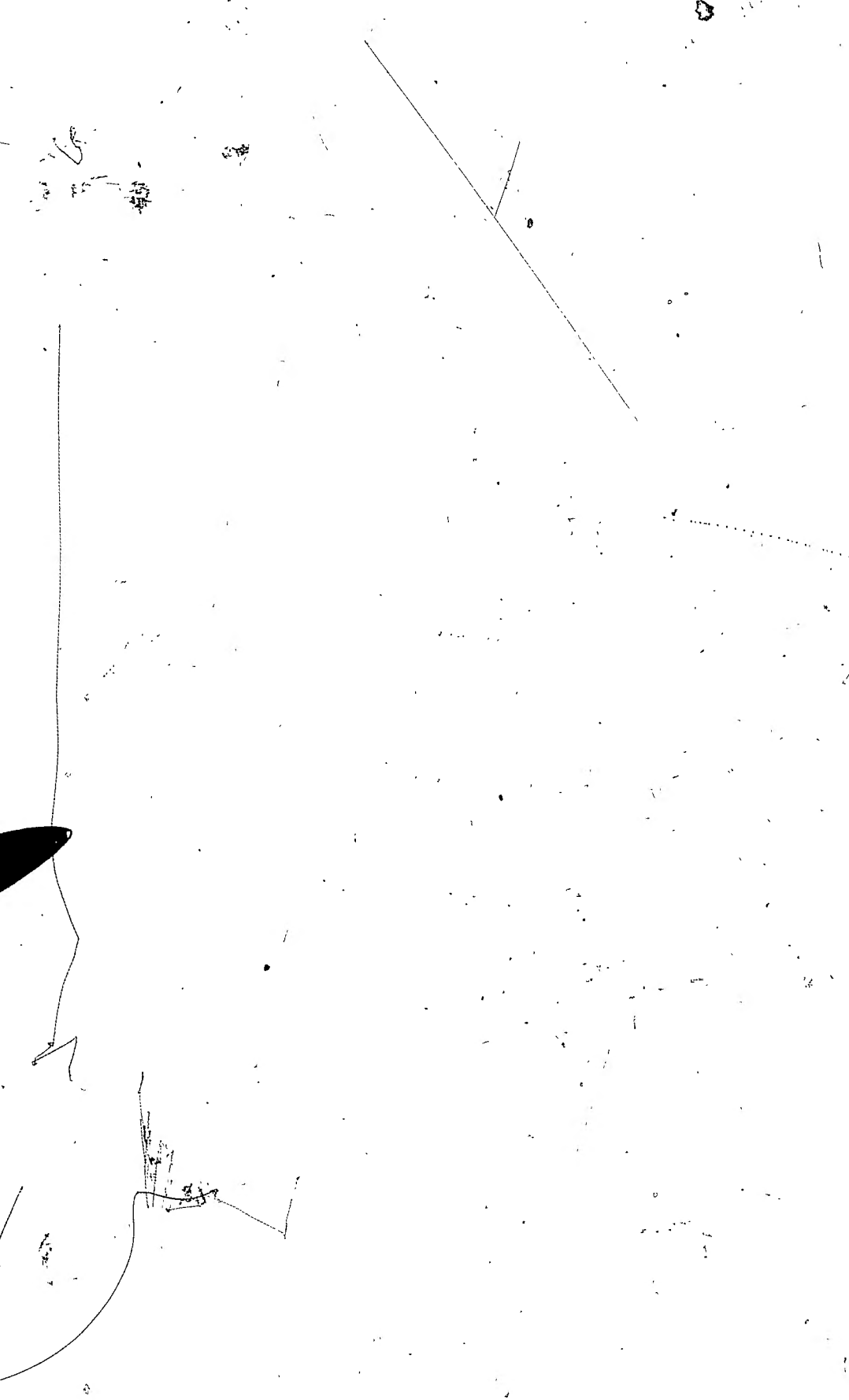


PAPERS RELATING TO THE HOLDING OF HOMESTEAD
ENTRIES BY MEMBERS OF THE DOUKHOBOR COM-
MUNITY, BEING PART OF A RETURN LAID ON THE
TABLE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON APRIL 17,
1907, WITH THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION
APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE AND ADJUST THE
CLAIMS OF DOUKHOBORS AS TO RESIDENCE AND
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OTTAWA
GOVERNMENT PRINTING BUREAU
1907



PAPERS RELATING TO DOUKHOBOR HOMESTEAD ENTRIES.

REPORT of interview between Honourable Frank Oliver, Minister of Interior, and Peter Veregin, head of the Doukhobor community, at Winnipeg, October 15, 1906, S. Reibin, Interpreter; J. Obed Smith, Immigration Commissioner, also present.

Mr. VEREGIN.—About five hundred Doukhobors have moved from Prince Albert (Rosthern), and have settled in Swan river, in township 35, range 31. These people have established three villages on lands which were entered for by Doukhobors about two years ago. The reason they have settled in this township is because people were complaining that the prairie was too wild, and they have begun to cultivate the land, and have broken a lot this summer, and, now there are one thousand more, who want to move to the same settlement, and, for such purpose the Doukhobors are asking government to let them have township 36, ranges 30 and 31, and the part of Thunder Hill which has not been entered for before. These people are now living on a lot of cultivated land in Prince Albert district. We know that these people before they can get their new entry, have to cancel their first homestead, so they wish to get permission from the government, to cancel by writing, as they do not wish to go back to Prince Albert personally.

Mr. VEREGIN wants to know whether Mr. Oliver received a letter from him in regard to the ages of the Doukhobor boys?

Mr. OLIVER.—No, I have not received any such letter.

Mr. VEREGIN states that he sent Mr. Oliver a very particular letter, explaining about the ages of the Doukhobor boys. He said that he sent men round the villages to take the names of those who were seventeen years, as the Doukhobors had received promise from the department to enter at seventeen years instead of eighteen, as is usual. It is now stated that a few of these boys were not seventeen years of age.

Mr. VEREGIN states that Paulo Planedin, Nicholai Zebroff and himself, were appointed as the agents to make entries, and they sent men through all the villages to take the names and ages, and asked them to make a thorough list, as they wanted to make homestead entries for these persons who wanted to live in their settlement. These men went through all the villages, and brought back lists of the names, and ages, and proceeded with the entries, and the people for whom they made homestead entries, made their own signatures under their authorization. We showed this to Mr. Smith, and he gave us authority to enter for them, and we have entered for the land.

Mr. SMITH, referring to records here finds that there are three homesteads in 36-30 west of first meridian, and one in 36-31 west of first meridian.

Mr. VEREGIN.—When inspectors came from Ottawa last fall, they were asked to forward the names of Doukhobors, and, as many of our men were out, men whom they sent to take the names and ages, went through all the houses, and mostly asked the mothers of the families,—who were afraid their sons were wanted for soldiers and would have to go away—and so, instead of giving the correct ages, in many cases, they stated the boys were a deal younger than they really were, sometimes two years and more. And, so, after inspection, the ages of a great many of these boys were found to be under seventeen years, but, who were in fact, of the proper age, and in many cases a good deal older. The Doukhobors therefore desire the government not to cancel these lands, as the boys are all of full age, and, as homestead fees have been paid, they desire that the entries be kept for them. The Doukhobors desire the government to have this

done at once, for they are afraid the lands will be cancelled, and then the boys will have no lands.

Mr. SMITH draws attention to the fact, that they have been here three years without being naturalized, and asks what objections they have to perform naturalization?

Mr. OLIVER states that he has nothing to do with their opinions or their decision in regard to naturalization, which was no concern of his.

Mr. VEREGIN says in regard to naturalization, besides many other reasons, the chief reason was that very many of the Doukhobors, found that the climate was pretty cold here, and as they wish to raise a little fruit, because they are vegetarians, and use no flesh at all, they had intention to look, though in Canada, for a little warmer place, as they hear there is some free land in British Columbia, and, at present, they have no fruit at all. When he arrived in Canada, he began to advise the Doukhobors very strongly to commence to cultivate the lands here. During the last three years the Doukhobors have been very successful, and have had very good crops, and the poor and hungry Doukhobors that were, now have a lot of grain and other outfits, and the majority of them have changed their minds, and are satisfied that they can live here very well indeed, and, Mr. Veregin, is of the opinion that all the Doukhobors will get the same ideas, and will decide to get patents for their homesteads.

Mr. VEREGIN states that he is on his way to Europe, and as he has not a passport, he would be very obliged if Mr. Oliver would give him a letter, which he would also be very thankful for, so that nobody would interfere with him. He is accompanied by five men, and he would very much like a letter.

Mr. OLIVER stated that he would be very glad to give Mr. Veregin a letter for himself and his friends who will accompany him, stating that they are reputable and peaceful people, and not likely to do any one any harm in Russia, as they have not done any one any harm in this country, but would inform Mr. Veregin that a country can only protect its own citizens, and, as Mr. Veregin is a citizen of Russia and not of Canada, therefore, when he goes to Russia and is under Russian government, and not under the government of Canada or Great Britain, Mr. Oliver cannot protect him.

Mr. VEREGIN stated that he would be very thankful for a letter of introduction as Mr. Oliver suggested, and, that very probably he would not go to Russia.

Mr. OLIVER.—There are four things Mr. Veregin speaks of: One is the removal from Prince Albert to Swan River. The second is in regard to the entries by boys who were under seventeen years of age. The third is in regard to naturalization. The fourth regarding passport.

In regard to the first, the Doukhobors are at liberty to abandon their homesteads in Prince Albert. They will have to give an abandonment in writing. They will not need to go to Prince Albert Land Office, in order to make this abandonment.

Mr. VEREGIN says we desire that the townships we select, should be as those we had before, as we had the right to both odd and even sections.

Mr. OLIVER.—If the claims of the railway company to the lands are cleared we will permit them to have both odd and even numbered sections.

In regard to Thunder Hill, I would have to make special inquiry regarding it, but in making new entries for lands we would recognize no privileges to Doukhobors more than to any other persons in Canada. It would be possible for the Doukhobors to live in villages, but it would not be possible for them to get their patents by living in villages.

Mr. VEREGIN says, that as all the rest of the Doukhobors are not getting their patents, so these people who will live in villages on those townships, will not expect their patents, but he thinks they will all get their patents before long.

Mr. OLIVER.—I am not considering the Doukhobor villages which are now established upon what were the Doukhobor reserves, those villages were established long ago. The law permitted villages at that time, but the law does not now permit the establishment of villages.

Mr. VEREGIN says it will be quite impossible to cultivate every homestead separately in these townships, as some of them are only stumps and swamps, and asks if you will give same privileges as they had before, so that they can plough some of the land

and clear out the stumps. He says it is only three years since there has been no Doukhobor reserve, and there is no one settler who would take land in these townships, where the land is not suitable for farming. These people had the privilege of living in villages in Prince Albert, and they thought they would have the same privilege, when they moved to Thunder Hill. These are not new immigrants, and we think they should get permission.

Mr. OLIVER.—I have to administer the law as it is in the book. The law did permit villages, so the Doukhobors had the privilege of villages, so far as it was given them, and so far as they complied with the village law; but there is no law to give villages now, and we cannot give villages to one set of people, and refuse them to another set of people.

Mr. VEREGIN says the township which he is asking for, is in the Doukhobor reserve, and they had the privilege to enter on land there.

Mr. OLIVER.—There is no Doukhobor reserve now.

Mr. VEREGIN says the Doukhobors would like to know what you will do with the land, which has been retained for Doukhobor village sites, would it be possible for us to buy this land from you at \$3 per acre? Mr. Veregin wants to know what will be done with the village site of 160 acres, which has been retained wherever there is a village? Around every village site, there are about forty homesteads, and the forty homesteaders would like to know if they can buy these homesteads and ask permission from the government to buy that land at not more than \$3 per acre, and then the village site will be owned by the village. As the Doukhobors are erecting pretty good villages, and, though they have great faith in the government that they will not do anything wrong, as long as the Doukhobors live in good shape, but, at the same time, they would desire to own the land themselves, that is, the land which is now Doukhobor village sites.

Mr. OLIVER.—I do not know what provision has been made by the government, I have never happened to see a promise in that connection.

Mr. SMITH states that he remembers we promised to hold village sites, and not allow them to be homesteaded.

Mr. VEREGIN says in Prince Albert, the Doukhobors have bought nearly all village sites.

Mr. OLIVER.—I will have to inquire.

Mr. VEREGIN speaks about some villages having buildings worth \$50,000.

Mr. OLIVER.—If we sell the village site, to whom will we sell it?

Mr. VEREGIN says to all the inhabitants who live in the village.

Mr. OLIVER.—By what way will we know we are selling it to all the inhabitants who live in the village? If the village will become incorporated, that is the way the law requires, so that they can hold property, I suppose we can sell them the village site, but unless they become incorporated, so that they come under the law regarding property, we cannot sell it to them. The law provides a way whereby people can become incorporated, and then they can hold property and they can sell property, so that either party can sue or can be sued in court according to the forms of law. There is no other way than this by which they can buy or we can sell. We desire to protect the people who are holding village sites, and that is why we won't let them go out of our hands, until they have the legal right to hold them for the people. We are not asking the Doukhobors to become naturalized citizens, but we have to administer the law as it is in regard to the rest of the people, and, of course, they must accept the difference that they make themselves between themselves and other people. We do not make the difference, and we do not find fault with them, but, if they make a difference, and it is a difference, then we cannot help it.

Mr. VEREGIN says he would very much like to get your opinion, as he is going to Europe, and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company are asking him for 4,000 men. Does Mr. Oliver think the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company will employ them?

Mr. OLIVER.—I could not tell you, I am sure, but it is quite possible they can employ them, and they would have to pay them. There would be no objection to them coming to Canada.

*MEMORANDUM of the Minister of Interior in regard to homestead entries by Doukhobors;
prepared for the information of Council.*

From time to time during several years past it has been brought to the attention of this department that the residence and other duties in respect of large areas of land—some 49 townships in all—held under homestead entry in the Yorkton and Prince Albert land agencies, in the province of Saskatchewan, by members of the Doukhobor sect or community, were in default, and subject to cancellation under the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act. Based on the allegation of default, increasingly numerous and persistent demands have been made for the cancellation of those entries, so that the land might be entered for by other settlers who would comply with the homestead provisions of the Lands Act. The demand came not only from people who desired to acquire the lands as homesteads, but also from people concerned in the business interests whose success depends on the settlement and cultivation of the adjacent land.

A considerable number of persons who desired to homestead on these lands have unlawfully entered into occupation by squatting on them, depending upon the requirements of the Lands Act for the ultimate cancellation of the Doukhobor entries, and hoping that if they were in occupation when the entries were cancelled they would thus secure a prior right to entry. Notices have been served on all such squatters that they have not acquired any rights and are subject to ejection.

As the Doukhobors, upon their arrival in Canada from Russia nearly eight years ago, were very poor, the department has hesitated to take any drastic action regarding their homesteads, in the belief that their failure to comply with the provisions of the Act arose chiefly from poverty; and with the expectation that as their means increased they would comply with the requirements of the Act. This was in accord with the policy which the department has pursued during the past nine years, namely, to relax the provisions of the Act to a reasonable degree in favour of the homesteader who, although poor, was progressive, and would ultimately become a successful and desirable settler.

As a result of developments during the season of 1905, it became apparent that something must be done to satisfy public opinion on the one hand, and to protect the legitimate interests of the Doukhobors, on the other.

As the Doukhobors lived almost entirely in the villages and were entitled to hold their homesteads under the hamlet provision of the Dominion Lands Act, their right to their homesteads did not altogether depend upon their residence actually upon them, and, as they speak little or no English, in order to arrive at a correct measure of their default under the Act, and a knowledge of the prospect of the default being remedied, several homestead inspectors were, in the early part of the present year, 1906, sent to take a census of the Doukhobor population; to locate their residence; and to measure and locate their improvements. The information secured indicated:

1st. That a very large proportion of the homesteads held under entry by Doukhobors were not being cultivated.

2nd. That cultivation was generally made by the community for the benefit of the community, without regard to the name of entrant or his place of residence.

3rd. That the people removed their residence from village to village, without regard to the location of the lands entered in their names.

4th. That although they had been over eight years in Canada, very few had become British subjects.

5th. That some entries were in the names of boys who were less than eighteen years of age, and that the persons in whose names other entries were held could not be found in any of the villages.

As a result of the investigation, a number of the entries in the two classes next above mentioned were cancelled, and the lands opened for re-entry.

An investigation of the records of the department showed that certain townships were reserved for the settlement of the Doukhobors in 1898. They went on the land in the year 1899 and established themselves in villages.

Certain communications looking to homestead entry by the Doukhobors passed between their presumed representatives and officials of the Department of the Interior in the year 1902. They were, however, very slow to avail themselves of the privilege, fearing that their doing so would render them liable to military service; and their religion being opposed to the holding of land in severalty. In order to overcome their objections to making entry for their lands in severalty, it was stated, in a letter from the then Minister, Honourable Mr. Sifton, dated 15th February, 1902, that they would be permitted to hold their individual homesteads by cultivating in common lands near the village of their residence. The clause of the letter of the Minister on this point is as follows:—

‘I have decided that those who will take their homesteads and accept of free lands from the government may live together in one or more villages, and instead of being compelled to cultivate each quarter-section held by each Doukhobor, that the land around the village itself may be cultivated and the work which otherwise would be required on each individual homestead may be done altogether around the village. But it would not be fair that those who take up their homesteads and live in their villages should be troubled with those who will not do so, and as those who do not take up a homestead will not be protected by the government after the first of May of this year, they will simply have to leave the villages to those who take up the homesteads and buy land elsewhere from some other person. If, for instance, a village wants fifty homesteads around the village, I will be satisfied if the amount of improvements required on each quarter-section is done around the village only, for the whole fifty. This would enable all those in the village to live together and to work together in and around the village without being compelled to go a long way out to their individual homesteads.’

As a result of the negotiations between the Doukhobors and the department, entries were ultimately made by representatives of the community in the names of members of the community, and when on December 15, 1904, the reserves were thrown open to general homestead entry the land in the townships originally reserved was almost entirely under entry by Doukhobors.

It would appear from the investigations held and from the records of the department that a large majority of the Doukhobors have since assumed that the entries so made by the community on behalf of the community, and the letter of the Minister permitting cultivation in common, were a sufficient protection to them in the exclusive occupation of the area at first set apart as their reserves, and afterwards entered for as homesteads, without compliance with the terms of the Homestead Act. This, of course, is not the case. The affidavit which an applicant for homestead entry must take explicitly provides that the entry must be for the sole use and benefit of the entrant. It would appear that they have also assumed that the permission of the Minister to cultivate in common was without restriction as to time, distance from residence or other consideration. In fact that it was given to permit the perpetuation of community conditions.

The provisions of the Lands Act are clear that, except in the special instance provided for in section 37 of the Lands Act of 1886, there must be individual cultivation on individual holdings for individual use and benefit in order to maintain entry and to secure patent. While the Minister had power to hold in abeyance the effect of these provisions he could not vary them; and as the statute was not amended to meet the case it would seem that the permission was given to encourage and facilitate individual cultivation and ownership, not to permit it to be avoided.

Assuming, however, that the Minister's permission to cultivate in common was a sufficient protection for Doukhobor entries—while not sufficient to entitle them to patent—its plain requirement that the homesteads of the village must be located around the village in which the homesteaders reside, debars from protection all entries made by residents of one village in the area around another village, and also those whose entries were at first in the vicinity of the village of their residence, but who have since removed to some other village, as well as those at an unreasonable distance from the village in which the homesteader resides.

Hon. Mr. Sifton's letter contemplates that there may be up to fifty homesteads around each village. Throughout the greater number of townships in which Doukhobor entries have been made both odd and even numbered sections are available for homesteading. Within a radius of three miles from any central point there are 120 quarter-sections, and assuming that the 15 quarter-sections of Hudson's Bay and school lands are in all cases within a three-mile radius from any village there remain 105 quarter-sections available for homesteading within three miles of each village, or twice as many homesteads as a village of 50 homesteaders would be entitled to. Where the odd numbered sections are not available there would still be 50 homesteads within three miles. In practice out of 61 villages 17 have over 40 homesteads and 3 have less than 20. The average number of homesteaders in a village is about 35. It would, therefore, seem fair that the words 'around the village,' used by Mr. Sifton, be considered to exclude all lands at a distance of more than three miles from it. Such distance would include in all cases where the odd numbered sections were open for homesteading, and which are the large majority, more than twice the maximum number of homesteads contemplated in a village, and in the smaller number of cases where the odd numbered sections were not open, nearly twice the actual average number of homesteaders in each village. That is to say, that entries held on homesteads more than three miles distant from the village of the residence of the homesteader could not be considered to be held in compliance with the most liberal possible construction of Mr. Sifton's letter.

It cannot be assumed that if the Doukhobors were to be permitted to permanently hold land without cultivation, they would be allowed to select it indiscriminately, as it would thus become a serious detriment to individual settlers amongst whose homesteads it might be scattered, by reason of its being held unoccupied and unimproved. The exchange of the odd-numbered sections held by the railway company, so that all the land in the tract reserved for the Doukhobors would be available for homesteading, as well as the terms of Mr. Sifton's letter, both indicate the purpose of the department that Doukhobor entries should be as nearly as possible in block. If the entries of community Doukhobors whose homesteads were within three miles of the village of their present residence were maintained and all others cancelled, the result would be, as shown by the investigation recently held, that 690 entries with 8,661 acres cultivation would be cancelled, and 1,259 entries with 33,862 acres cultivation maintained. Of the cultivation on lands the entries to which were so cancelled 5,700 acres would be within three miles of the various villages, and 2,961 acres at a distance of over three miles. The villages affected would thus be deprived of one-fourth of their present means of support by the permission to cultivate in block, subject to contiguous residence. This condition exists because of the absolute disregard of the Doukhobors to the requirements of the homestead law. As this disregard is as great now as ever—as shown by the removal of the three villages from the Prince Albert to the Yorkton Agency during the past season, which removal is expected to be followed by one twice as large next season—the conditions now existing will become more exaggerated from year to year.

A homestead patent may be earned in three years from the date of entry, but a patent may not be issued to any person who is not a British subject. As very few of the Doukhobors have yet become British subjects, even if they had earned their patents by compliance with the law, patents could not be issued to them. Section 7 of the amendments of 1891 to the Dominion Lands Act provides that if at the end of five years from date of entry, patent is not applied for, the entry may be cancelled.

The large majority of Doukhobor entries were made over three years ago, and therefore those Doukhobors who have complied with the requirements of the law regarding residence and cultivation could protect themselves in their holding without further residence, if they would, by applying for patent. But as they have not done so, and persistently refuse to do so, in view of their frequent removals from village to village, their failure to cultivate at all many of the homesteads for which they have entered, and the fact that the entries made and the cultivation done are not for their individual use and benefit, as the terms of the Act and the express words of the affidavit of application for entry absolutely require, as shown by the investigation and the records, it is evidently impossible for the department to effectually protect their entries and improvements, and at the same time comply in any reasonable degree with the provisions of the Lands Act.

But a general cancellation of the homesteads held in the names of Doukhobors, without other provision for them, would be an aggravation and not an avoidance of difficulty. The people number nearly nine thousand. They have supported themselves and become prosperous according to their standards of life, in following their system of community cultivation and ownership of property. To cancel absolutely all entries in default would be to throw open to entry by others all the lands which the Doukhobors had cultivated, and upon whose cultivation they depend for their living. Whatever their religious beliefs and however much these have prevented them from conforming to the terms of the Lands Act, they are at least peaceable, self-supporting people, whom it would not be sound public policy, under any circumstances, to reduce to the condition of paupers by depriving them of their homes and the lands which they hold under cultivation. In order to arrive at a conclusion as to what was best to be done, a departmental commission of inquiry was sent out in August last for the purpose of making close examination as to all particulars connected with the occupation and ownership of their lands by the Doukhobors.

The commission reported on November 25, 1906. They found 61 villages, 8,701 people, 2,160 homestead entries, 49,429 acres under cultivation, average entries per village 35, average population per village 142, and an average cultivation of 5½ acres per head. They found that while the large majority of the Doukhobors had not claimed, and, indeed, refused to acknowledge individual ownership of their homesteads a few of them, called Independents, although residing in the villages, cultivated their own homesteads and either had become, or expressed their intention of becoming British subjects and acquiring patents for their lands in the ordinary course. The total number of Independents was 849, they had made 211 homestead entries, with 6,906 acres total cultivation, an average of 8½ acres per head. As the independents were complying or intended to comply with the terms of the Lands Act their case presented no difficulties, but no solution could be arrived at in respect of the communists that would be in accord with the provisions of the Act.

Sometime after the entries had been made, in 1903-4 it was found that the lands upon which the villages were situated were under entry. In order to protect the rights of the individual members of the community to their homes, shortly before the reserves were opened to entry, all entries then held against village sites were cancelled and the lands retained in the hands of the government. The commission found that although all entries to village sites in Yorkton district were cancelled in December, 1904, on account of the frequent removals that had taken place or for other reasons many villages or parts of villages in Yorkton and Prince Albert districts were located on land still under entry. Thirty-three quarter sections on which are villages or portions of villages are under entry by community Doukhobors, of these 33, nineteen are resident and fourteen are absent. Three quarter-sections on which are villages or portions of villages are under entry by Independent Doukhobors. Thirty-four quarter sections on which are villages or portions of villages are reserved by the department. Two villages are on railroad lands, and five villages are on lands purchased by the Doukhobor community. Out of a total of 61 villages, although the department took all reasonable means to protect the members of the community in their residence, 38, or over half, are either partially or entirely without protection as matters now stand.

In order to protect the village sites it would appear necessary that any entries standing against them should be cancelled in whole or in part as might be necessary and such arrangements made with the entrants as may be proper and possible.

An instance showing the impossibility of applying the provisions of the Land Act to the Doukhobors and the necessity of taking means not provided in the Act for their protection is that of the three villages of Gromovoe, Archangelskoe and Perihodnoe, situated on S.W. 33, 34, 31 W. 1st; N.W. 16, 35, 31 W. 1st; and S.E. 7, 35, 31 W. 1st, respectively, in the Yorkton Land Agency. The population of the villages is as follows:—Gromovoe 104, Archangelskoe 82, Perihodnoe 104. All the people of the three villages were residents of villages in Prince Albert Land Agency. The lands entered in the names of some of them had very considerable community cultivation. They removed from Prince Albert villages during the past summer and built the three new villages mentioned on lands entered in the names of Doukhobors who were not residents of those villages, and have begun the cultivation of contiguous land also entered in the names of persons who are not residents of the villages. Under any possible construction of the Act these people must be considered to have rendered liable to cancellation the community cultivated land which they held in Prince Albert agency upon the cultivation of which the Doukhobors of the adjacent villages are dependent for their subsistence. And at the same time if the sites of their new villages are to be protected, and their cultivated lands as well, the entries standing against them must be cancelled.

From careful study of all the facts and after an experience of eight years it would appear to be impossible to protect the community rights of the Doukhobors as they understand and desire them under the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act, and it would further appear to be impracticable to longer permit them to ignore leading principles and provisions of the Act while claiming protection under it.

The hope of the department that the new conditions surrounding them in Canada would result in their accepting Canadian citizenship and conforming to the requirements of the Lands Act has not been realized, and so far as the majority of the members of the sect are concerned seems to be further from realization now than when they first arrived. The concessions hitherto made by the department appear to have strengthened the spirit of communism against that of individualism or independence. It would seem therefore that the time has come to set clearly before the people the disadvantages of communism and the advantages of independence by only giving homestead rights to those who are prepared to comply with homestead conditions. At the same time as already said it would not be well to take such action as would deprive them either of their homes or any portion of their cultivation that can reasonably be preserved to them, or of the opportunity to reasonably increase their cultivation if they insist upon remaining communists and refuse to become British subjects.

The undersigned, therefore, recommends:—

1st. That Doukhobors who are personally cultivating for their own use the land for which they hold homestead entry, and are, therefore, called Independents, whether in actual residence upon such land or availing themselves of the privileges of the hamlet provision of the Dominion Lands Act by residing in a village within three miles of such land, and who have declared their intention of becoming British subjects by naturalization, and acquiring patent for the land, to be maintained in their entries. If the homestead of the Independent resident of a village is more than three miles from that village his entry will be protected for six months. At the end of six months if he is not in residence on his homestead his entry will be subject to cancellation.

2nd. All entries by Doukhobors who are not cultivating the land entered in their names for their own benefit to be cancelled.

3rd. The quarter-section upon which each community village is situated and such adjoining or adjacent quarter-sections not exceeding in total area 15 acres to each resident of the village, exclusive of Independents, or approximately three times as much land as they have brought under cultivation during eight years, so adjusted as to include as much of the community cultivation as possible, but in no case exceeding a distance of three miles from the village, to be held from re-entry for the purpose of

protecting the community Doukhobors in their residence and as much of their cultivation as is possible under these provisions during the pleasure of the government.

4th. All other cancelled lands to be held from re-entry by others than members of the community whose entries have been cancelled for a period of three months.

5th. Entry fees already paid on account of members of the community to be credited against re-entries by members of the community.

6th. Lands not entered for within that period by members of the community as above stated to be open for entry by others subject to the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act or such provision as may be made by order in council under it.

7th. The cultivated area on any quarter-section re-entered for either by members of the community or others to be excepted from the right of the entrant for the year 1907; the community to have the right to enter upon and cultivate such land during that year.

8th. Members of the community who make re-entry as above provided to have all the privileges of ordinary homesteaders, except in so far as the community is herein given the right to cultivate the land that is already under cultivation on the homestead during the year 1907; and to be subject to all the requirements of the Dominion Lands Act as to homesteading, provided that residence of the homesteader in a village not more than three miles from his homestead may be accepted in place of residence upon the homestead as fulfilling the requirements of the Lands Act entitling him to patent.

9th. Provision to be made for the visit of a commission to all Doukhobor villages to announce the determination reached and to select the land which is not to be subject to re-entry; also to take entries by community Doukhobors as above provided during visit or visits.

-(Sgd.) FRANK OLIVER,

Minister Interior.

OTTAWA, December 1, 1906.

CIRCULAR which was printed in English and Russian and addressed to the Elders and People of each of the 61 Doukhobor villages during the month of February, 1907.

The government is glad to see that some of the Doukhobors are cultivating their own land, and have become or are becoming citizens of Canada and British subjects. But it is very sorry to see that after having been in Canada for seven years, the large majority of the Doukhobors still cultivate their land in common and refuse to become citizens of the country. They have left large areas of land which the government has permitted them to hold in their names without cultivation and improvement. The law is that a man must cultivate his own land or he cannot hold it. The people who are not Doukhobors now demand that Doukhobors be not longer allowed to hold land without cultivating it and becoming citizens of the country.

The government of Canada is the majority of the people of Canada, and when the majority of the people say that the Doukhobors must not be allowed to hold land without cultivation any longer, the government must obey and must cancel the entries on lands that are not properly held, so that they may be properly held by other people. The only Doukhobor entries that are properly held are those held by men who live either on their land or in a village within three miles of it, and who cultivate their own land for their own use, and who have either already become, or intend to become Canadian citizens or British subjects.

If any man who lives in a village cultivates his land more than three miles from the village in which he lives, his entry will be protected for six months to enable him

to build and live on the land. If he does not build and live on the land within that time the entry will be cancelled.

While the government wishes every man to cultivate his own land for his own use and to become a citizen it will not attempt to compel the Doukhobors to do either. It will protect them as it has hitherto done in their religious beliefs, but it cannot longer give them privileges in regard to land which it does not give to other people. If the land upon which the village stands or partly stands is under entry, the entry will be cancelled in whole or in part, so that the government can protect the Doukhobors in their homes.

The community entries in the vicinity of each village, to the amount of fifteen acres to each person in the village, and so distributed as to comprise as much of the community cultivation as possible will be cancelled, and the land held by the government for the protection of the community Doukhobors during the pleasure of the government. All other entries in the names of community Doukhobors will be cancelled. The Doukhobors whose entries have been cancelled will be permitted to make re-entry on cancelled land which is open for entry at any time within three months from receiving this notice, and their re-entries will be made on application without payment of an additional fee.

Doukhobors who make entry within three months either with the commission who will visit your village or at the land office must state when making re-entry whether they intend to live on the land or in the village, and must state their intention of becoming British subjects. If the land is within three miles of the village in which they reside, they will be able to hold the land by cultivating it for their own use while living in the village. But if it is more than three miles from the village they must live on the land and must begin to live on it within six months of the date of their re-entry. All re-entries will be subject to cancellation for non-compliance with these conditions of the law. If there is any community cultivation on lands re-entered for, it will be reserved from the use of the homesteader for the use of community during the year 1907, afterwards it will be for the sole use of the homesteader.

PETITION to the Minister of the Interior and all people in Canada from the Christian Community of the Universal Brotherhood of the Doukhobors in Canada.

On the 28th of January, 1907, John McDougall passed through our villages and declared being sent by the government to inform all Doukhobors that the land they received and had in their possession since three years is no longer considered to be theirs.

He left in each village two circulars in which it is explained to the Doukhobors on what ground the land will be taken from them. While nothing definite is said in these circular letters, John McDougall firmly asserted that, after five weeks, he will again pass through the villages, and the land will be distributed under new conditions:

1st. If a Doukhobor will take the oath of allegiance to become a British subject he will receive 160 acres of land for every adult.

2nd. The Doukhobor who will not take the oath of allegiance and will not change his convictions in regard to community of agricultural land, will get a reserve of 15 acres for every person; all the other lands are declared free for entry for whomsoever wants to apply.

It is further stated in the circular that the government of Canada represents the majority of the Canadian people, and when the majority of the people say that they should not be allowed to possess the land which they do not cultivate, the government has to obey, and must cancel the entries for the homesteads which the proprietors own illegally in order to enable other people to make entries, who will hold the land in conformity with the law. The government and the majority of the people, as explained by John McDougall, find the most important reason for cancellation in the fact that we do not cultivate the land.

Though we doubt that McDougall be sent by the government, we nevertheless want to make this declaration to the government and to the people.

It is said in the circular that we do not cultivate the land. This is quite untrue, as can be confirmed by the commission which passed last year through the lands and which surveyed the lands tilled and under cultivation. A second testimony of our cultivation of the land is given by the quantity of crops sold by our community, viz., 150,000 bushels wheat, 100,000 bushels oats, apart from the provisions for the summer and the coming winter. If we do not cultivate the land, where do these crops come from?

Moreover, we declare sincerely to the government and the people of Canada, that we are agriculturists, and that we prefer this work as being the most regular, the most honest, the most lawful and most fundamental in our life, and that we have always tried, and will always endeavour, with all our strength, to work in cultivating the soil.

When we arrived here, having no horses, no cattle, we, and our wives, harnessed ourselves to the plough and thus we tilled the soil. We think that you did not forget it. For an outsider it might appear ridiculous, but we could not act otherwise, as we consider this work honest and lawful, and think seriously about it not only men but also women.

If there exists no real liking for agriculture, what kind of women could you compel to put themselves before the plough? It is not a task common to man, and especially not to women. We fully realize all this, but we had no other resource and our sincere love brought us to it.

And if, on the basis of such false reports, the land will be taken from us, it will be illegal and inhuman. It is true that the people who live nearest to us and who are not agriculturists, but merchants of the town of Yorkton, as for instance, to mention ranchmen such as Robert Buchanan and Mackenzie, at Fort Pelly, contemplate our life with hatred and certainly try, with all that is in their power, to destroy it and to prompt others to do the same. But every sound-minded man who is not personally acquainted with our life should not be influenced by such suggestions, because such insinuations proceed from the evil spirit which detests the union and the community of men wherein rests the law of God and the doctrine of Christ. It is known to everybody that Christ in His teachings called and calls the whole of mankind up to such a union as children of the same Father, and such a life as described in the Gospel was realized at Christ's time, since when nineteen centuries have elapsed. Then those who followed with faith Christ's doctrine also put it into practice; they brought their riches and all their material wealth to the apostles and called that common property. Our life in common is exclusively based on that principle. Men who believe in Christ should already have led such a life, as enough time has elapsed since His appeal, but they are trying to destroy it in others, and what excuse will these people have before the same Christ on the day of His second advent?

Who of the living can assert that that day will not soon come? Perhaps it is already near, but mankind continues to live in a thoughtless way, like the above-mentioned merchants, who do not live in expectation of that day and are but looking for profits.

And as long as the Doukhobors addressed themselves to them for all they needed the Doukhobors were good people, and now, since they have built their own stores and buy as much as they can of the necessary merchandise from these stores and even from factories, the Doukhobors have become objectionable people. Such men wish and endeavour to deprive the Doukhobors from their land, as if that could relieve them. But

we hope that the majority of the Canadian people, with whom the government will side, will disagree therewith and will take into consideration that the earth is God's creation, created for the benefit of the human race and for all that live on it, that the earth is our common mother who feeds us, protects us, rejoices us and warms us with love from the moment of our birth until we go to take our eternal rest in her maternal bosom; and mankind has not come yet to understand by their reasoning that one can live and utilize the soil without any survey and division, but has found it convenient to survey the land and to award to every person 160 acres. Somehow it is equitable and lawful. If the population should increase at such a rate that there would not be land enough, it ought then to be redistributed according to the number of the people, and then there might be in lieu of 160 acres, 100 acres a head, and this, too, would be lawful.

At present there are a good deal of free lands, and would it be right that, next to a man who would possess 160 acres, there was one who would hold 15 acres. John McDougall assures us that the government will protect us, as is said in the circular letter, in the free exercise of our faith, as heretofore; but he insists at the same time on the necessity of taking the oath of allegiance. We asked John McDougall if he believed in Christ. He answered, 'Yes.' We asked him if he was acquainted with Christ's teachings he answered that he knew them.

Does Christ in His teachings forbid to swear, that is the use of an oath? 'No,' he answered. 'He does not.'

We asked the interpreter to tell him that he did not know Christ's teachings. He became confused and, with a flushed face, he answered that in the Gospel it is said: 'Yes, yes or no, no.' For whatsoever is more than these cometh from evil.

We say that we cannot, conforming ourselves to those teachings, take any oath, and if the government of the people wants to protect us in the free exercise of our faith, we declare that our very creed is to live in accordance with Christ's doctrine and that we cannot otherwise conceive the faith: believe in Christ as in the Son of God, and live and act against His teachings.

Then one would ask oneself if that is faith.

John said after such a colloquy: 'I do not know anything about it.'

'I leave you the circular letters. All is written down there.'

'There are two ways for you and you will decide as you think fit.'

And he repeats again that it is wanted by the majority of the people.

If he tells the truth that it is required by the majority of the people, then the people do not understand us, and do not conceive our position with regard to our faith, or it is us who cannot understand the people. If they dispossess us of our lands because we do not cultivate them, there is no need of explanation, because the question has been sufficiently exposed before.

And if they take the lands from us because we do not take an oath, we say that we consider this question resolved since the time we left Russia and we migrated hither to Canada. We beg not to mistake our words for arrogance, but to consider them as a fraternal explanation.

Is it possible that you did not know why the incident has taken place between us and the Russian government and why we left our country and migrated to your country, Canada?

This happened only because we did not choose to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas, Alexandrovitch. We had and have our reasons therefor: Christ forbids to take an oath; we believe in Christ.

The Russian government did not take Christ's teachings into consideration and acted most cruelly towards us. We do not want to give any particulars of these cruelties, but we will only say that financially and materially it has completely ruined us, and even lives have been lost.

After that we asked the Russian government to allow us to go, which it has indeed done.

And if, at the present moment, the Canadian government and people should intend to bring this question forward again and to persecute us by the forfeiture of the lands.

it would be as if for instance, after an ox had been flayed by somebody, one would have it skinned again by another.

But is it possible that these people do not notice that the skin has been taken off and that another skin has not had the time to grow.

And if one begins to take our land, if not totally, it is self-evident that here, too, Christ's doctrine is not taken into consideration, and we will be compelled to again prepare for the same sufferings and persecutions through which we had to go in Russia on account of our belief.

We say with a sincere feeling that we all are most thankful to the government and to the whole people of Canada for having sheltered us and warmed us and for having exempted us from some general exigencies which we had considered to be contrary to our convictions.

We have been allowed to be exempted from the military service, we have been permitted to live in villages and to cultivate the soil in common; for all of this we possess documents issued by the government.

If there had been no such concessions we would not have made so many efforts, especially during the last three or four years, and moreover, after we had been forced to return to our villages.

We did the utmost we could, we built houses, the soil has not only been tilled by the men, who are accustomed to it, but also by the women and the children, who worked till exhausted.

We founded steam mills, we acquired steam ploughing engines and steam threshers, we organized steam brick factories, we finished now the construction of a great flour mill which, with the machinery, will cost us \$30,000, and though we lived in this region during eight years, yet we have had no joy in our life, as the life itself did not allow it.

We had nothing and often we had to work more than was good.

We have now, thank God, if not much, anyhow something, and we can live more freely, according to everybody's wish as is known; is it not true? and here appear unforeseen misapprehensions like the circular of John McDougall, which may lead to persecutions; and after the persecutions the sufferings will come, while at the time we are living in there ought to be more compassion than ill-will among the people.

We beg you, the government, as well as the whole Canadian people to think most earnestly about all this and to act afterwards as your heart will advise you to do.

If you take our fraternal explanation into consideration, and if you try to understand the conception of our faith, in that case the land will not be taken from us, the declaration of John McDougall will have no effect, and we express to all of you our utmost gratitude.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF DOUKHOBORS IN CANADA.

REPORT of Interview between the Honourable Frank Oliver, Minister of Interior, and certain representatives of the Doukhobors, on Monday, February 25, 1907, in regard to the foregoing petition of protest. S. Reibin, Interpreter.

The DOUKHOBORS.—We hope you will be kind enough to satisfy our petition and do everything the Doukhobors desire.

Mr. OLIVER.—I have read the petition, but it does not alter the position. What am I to do with the people who have squatted on the land in your reserves or who intend to squat upon it?

The DOUKHOBORS.—You are able to tell them that the Doukhobors made entries in accordance with the agreement which the government made before they came from Russia.

Mr. OLIVER.—I cannot tell them that the Doukhobors are holding land in accordance with an agreement made before they came from Russia because that is not true.

The DOUKHOBORS.—We think it would be true because if the Doukhobors had not had such a promise they would not have come to the country. If the government of Canada had suggested before the Doukhobors left Russia that this would not be carried out, they are sure they would not have come at all.

Mr. OLIVER.—If the Doukhobors had suggested the same terms which you suggest now the government would have said they could not come on those terms.

The DOUKHOBORS.—The Doukhobors think that the Canadian government knew, because it was for the sake of this that the Doukhobors left Russia. This information was given to the Doukhobors before they left Russia. They left Russia because they could not live there and do what they thought was right by their religion. They cannot take an oath for the Czar of Russia, they cannot bear arms, and, in accordance with the letter, the Canadian government were kind enough to take the Doukhobors out of the military service.

Mr. OLIVER.—No special law was made for the Doukhobors. The laws of Canada allow those who do not wish to bear arms exemption from doing so, such as Quakers, and others.

The DOUKHOBORS.—The government were kind enough to allow us to break the land and cultivate it in one block, and not in blocks separately.

Mr. OLIVER.—They made no agreement to allow you to cultivate in that way before you came from Russia.

The DOUKHOBORS.—Everything you have said is very correct. Our villages are very sure that the government promised and Mr. Sifton wrote making new articles and in the new agreement said nothing about naturalization. He said that in three years the land would be ours.

Mr. OLIVER.—No ; but after you own the land you can do what you wish with it.

The DOUKHOBORS.—When entry is made by each Doukhobor and the lands cultivated in one block, he is entitled to the land and he can give the same to any person or to any trustees he chooses. He is not required to be naturalized. Your government promised the Doukhobors before they left Russia that they would do anything in this letter. We have spent all our money and labour in improving this district.

Mr. OLIVER.—I do not see why the Doukhobors refuse the free gift of land to the people. When I offer you the land free of charge you do not accept it. You ask us to make a different law for you from that of other people, in regard to ownership of land. We have never promised to do that.

DOUKHOBORS.—The Doukhobors will be perfectly satisfied if you will not issue patents but leave them the land on the conditions which they have held it on so far. We have no intention to sell the land.

Mr. OLIVER.—When you came over first the Canadian government expected that you would accept the free grant that we are giving you, but on the conditions given to other people, not on other conditions. To make it easy for you a certain tract of land was set apart as a reserve and no person else was allowed to take land there, but you did not take it, you would not make entry for it. Other people began to ask 'why are these people holding great areas of land under conditions which we are not able to obtain.' So Mr. Sifton said 'we must get the Doukhobors to make entry,' and this letter was written to them in order that they might hold their land in severalty, not in common. You made entries. Mr. Sifton made the conditions as easy as possible, but you treated these entries as if they had not been made and as if the land were still a reserve. Now, the other people say 'by what right do these people hold this land? This land is not the government's land, it is the people's. If the Doukhobors are not going to hold the land in the same way we hold it, we want it. The Doukhobors are not using it. The conditions on which any man may hold government land is that he should use it. The Doukhobors are not fulfilling the conditions. It is not their

land. We want it.' There is no way under our law by which you can hold that land. A man goes on it and you expect us to put him off, but I have no rightful authority to put him off.

DOUKHOBORS.—It will be a great disappointment to the Doukhobors who have taken this letter as a law.

MR. OLIVER.—You have mis-read the letter. You say that once an entry has been made by an individual Doukhobor and the land in the reserve is cultivated, he is entitled to the land and may give it to any person or trustees whom he may choose. That is not what Mr. Sifton says. When a Doukhobor is entitled to the land he may give it to any person, but Mr. Sifton does not say that he becomes entitled to it without living on the land and cultivating it. Once you own the land, however, you can sell it.

DOUKHOBORS.—This letter is very clear:—'I have decided that those who will take their homesteads and accept of free land from the government may live together in one or more villages, and instead of being compelled to cultivate each quarter-section held by each Doukhobor, the land around the village itself may be cultivated, and the work which otherwise would be required on each individual homestead may be done altogether around the village. . . . If, for instance, a village wants fifty homesteads, around the village, I will be satisfied if the amount of improvements required on each quarter-section is done around the village only, for the whole fifty. This would enable all those in the village to live together and to work together in and around the village without being compelled to go a long way out to their individual homesteads.'

MR. OLIVER.—Suppose we take the instance of a village with fifty homesteads. You take your homesteads around the village and then you cultivate the land. There would be no serious objection to that, although there was no authority in the law to allow you to do so. We might go to parliament to ask that a law be made so that this can be done, but it is not promised to give you a patent for it. You were allowed to hold your land in that way. We might go to parliament to get authority to give you your land in that way, but you do not do even that. A man is in this village to-day and in another village to-morrow.

DOUKHOBORS.—I object to this. Probably you will get very few men who would be farther than fifty homesteads. There are very few that will be farther than that. All Doukhobors live in the centre of the land. We have no intention to keep our community forever. We think if your government will leave the Doukhobors as they are, every day we have new individual Doukhobors, and so soon as they get richer the Doukhobors will become British subjects. In view of this we were pretty sure we were always ready to break up and everyone to have his homestead separately. It would be an injustice to say that the Doukhobors are far from their homesteads.

MR. OLIVER.—I have the figures to show the location of the Doukhobors. I have sent men over to see where the Doukhobors are located.

DOUKHOBORS.—We have a plan on which each village is marked and on which the land is marked, and we think there are very few. It is true that some have located in a village, and have made entry for land outside of the village. Entry has been made for young boys who are far away.

MR. OLIVER.—In the Prince Albert village there is a man whose entry is on cultivated land in the village. He moved to Yorkton.

DOUKHOBORS.—They do not want you to hold it.

MR. OLIVER.—If I cancelled his entry and let another man go on it he gets the improvements of the community.

DOUKHOBORS.—We would not take the Prince Albert colony's example. They moved by their own will and would lose their improvements. It would not affect the Doukhobors at all. We are sent by the Doukhobors who have this letter, and we are trying to fulfil your laws correctly. The last time we saw the Minister of the Interior, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, before your election, he said anything in the letter of Mr. Sifton must be carried out by the government, and on the basis of this letter we were settled.

Mr. OLIVER.—If your people had carried out their part of the agreement, as Mr. Sifton expected, there would have been no trouble.

DOUKHOBORS.—We cannot see anything that we have not done.

Mr. OLIVER.—You were going to take the land around the village and cultivate around the village, but the land is taken everywhere in connection with the village, some in Yorkton and elsewhere. If I were to cancel all the entries I am entitled to under the letter, about one-fifth or one-fourth of the total improvements of the Doukhobors would be lost to them. I do not want to do that. I do not want a stranger to go on the improvements you have made close to your village.

DOUKHOBORS.—If you cancel the land you change the agreement; it does not mean that we are holding fifteen acres of land. We are surprised that the government has changed its plan.

Mr. OLIVER.—The government has not changed its plan but wants you to fulfil the requirements of it.

DOUKHOBORS.—For instance, I will show this letter to any Englishman and he will say: 'You have a right to hold this land. I did not know that you had such a letter.'

Mr. OLIVER.—If your people had acted according to the tenor of that letter, you would have been all right. You took it to mean that you could do as you liked in that area, and when you saw fit you could get your patent. The whole intent of that letter was to get you to take the land individually, as the law required, and you must be naturalized to get a patent. We must allow you to continue to hold it illegally or there must be some arrangement for you to hold what you have made use of. What you have not made use of someone else must go on and use.

DOUKHOBORS.—Of course we do not think that the government, after they have reserved the land for newcomers, will take it away from us after we have cultivated it as much as we were able and bought so many steam-ploughs for this purpose. If you take all this land it will not be a great pleasure to the government to see that the Doukhobors have not a sufficient quantity of food for themselves.

Mr. OLIVER.—We do not wish to interfere with your food. You have brought under cultivation five acres to every person. You have been here for seven years. You have been poor and have had great disadvantages. We will give three times as much for each person.

DOUKHOBORS.—We think it is not fair to say seven years. As you know, until Mr. Veregin arrived there was no cultivation because the Doukhobors had desired to leave the country, and were forced by the government to go back to the villages. After Mr. Veregin arrived, Mr. Sifton said he would do what he could to settle these affairs, so Mr. Veregin induced us to take land individually and we began to work. In these pilgrimages we wasted our force, so that it is only since three years that we began to cultivate. It takes three years to cultivate five acres, but during this time we graded railways, because we needed money, but this year we put all our force on cultivation and have bought for this purpose twenty engines.

We think we will not be able to raise any cattle on fifteen acres because fifteen acres is not a sufficient quantity. We think that one hundred and sixty acres would be too little for us. You will say so in future, when you see what good agriculturists we are. We have bought fifteen sections to cultivate in addition to our homesteads. We do not do anything but plough. So soon as we are able we will be cultivating very much more.

Mr. OLIVER.—Fifteen acres for each member of a family of six would be ninety acres to the farm. If a man had a large family, he would have one hundred and sixty acres.

DOUKHOBORS.—We will ask you very earnestly, as we know we cannot do anything against you. You have the power. You are the Government. We have very kind and friendly wishes to you and are asking you to take our condition before your attention and let us have the land we have entered for, and we hope that you will never be disappointed that the Doukhobors will do any harm to you. This year we have decided not to go out to work at all but to put all our force into cultivation, and we

will do all we have promised and cultivate the land we have under entry, except land not fit for cultivation, like sloughs and sand. All the Doukhobors say we hope the Canadian government will continue as friendly as they have been so far, and will continue to protect us in our religion.

MR. OLIVER.—I do not know your religion but believe it is a good religion. The Canadian government has no desire to interfere with any good, religious people, whatever their religion may be, but the giving of public land is not a matter of religion but of law and fair-play. When you come and say you have to have a different law because you are different, I must say that I have to deal with all the people in the same way, and if I were to say, 'I am going to give land to the Doukhobors on certain terms, and to others on different terms,' it would not be right. This government is not the government of Russia. The government of Russia can give favours to one man, but this government cannot do that.

DOUKHOBORS.—We say that the Russian law is worse. You were able to put us off swearing. In Russia no person gives any privilege to the people. They pay no attention to the people. I am very sure that you yourself and the parliament could let the Doukhobors be as they were.

MR. OLIVER.—We have to get the approval of the people to support what we do. If the people see that we are giving your people more privileges than we are giving them, what will they say to us? They will say: 'Your own people are not as good in your eyes and you are not good enough to be our government.'

DOUKHOBORS.—There will be just a little difference. I have shown this circular to many persons, and no one has had any objection, except our neighbours. The Canadian people will have no objection. We have no desire to take your land and escape somewhere.

MR. OLIVER.—Once you get a patent for the land the government has no control over it. Until you get a patent, however, the government is responsible for the way in which you handle it.

DOUKHOBORS.—We hope that you will do your best.

MR. OLIVER.—There has been some misunderstanding about the position. We want to give every Doukhobor an opportunity to take land according to our law. We are reserving the villages and cultivated land, so that the people will have everything that they are using now, and besides we will give them an opportunity to make entry for other land, the same as any person else. They do not have to take any oath, but it will be necessary for them to take an oath before they can become owners of the land and get patents. I do not think it would be right for them to make entry unless they intended to take the oath when the time came for them to get patents. I am not saying that they should think so, but I think that myself. I think Mr. McDougall gave notice that until the first of May you have the right to enter for that land at the Land Office, so that in a way your entries are cancelled for the time being, but it is only for the purpose of readjusting them. The entries were cancelled with the view that the men now living in a village could make their entries near the village. It was not to deprive the Doukhobors of the land, but to give them an opportunity, if they wanted to get the land, to take it where it would be convenient. For a distance of three miles around each village they do not have to go on the land. Three miles would hold most of the homesteads in the villages. You went into the villages, but moved about, so that the entries were scattered, which was not in accordance with the conditions of Mr. Sifton's letter. You have a chance of making a living, as you have fifteen acres, instead of five, and have an opportunity to make entry. Any person within three miles of a village can live in the village. The circular does not state that your people can own this land as a community.

DOUKHOBORS.—It means that we can plough our land as a community. This decision is against the letter.

MR. OLIVER.—You have not fulfilled the conditions of that letter and have forfeited your rights under it. We cannot keep to the terms for all time when you are not keeping to them any of the time.

DOUKHOBORS.—We are willing to have responsible persons even from the United States, come among us to investigate the matter, and they will find that we are carrying out this letter, with the exception of a few men. If you were to go there in person you would find that with the exception of those who have made entry far from the villages, we are fulfilling the terms to the letter. The villages are in the centre of the entries.

Mr. OLIVER.—I have sent out men in whom I have confidence who have examined the lands, visited your villages, and taken the names of the people. I have checked the report over with the entries in the land office. I have sent out another set of men and they have found the same conditions. These men are telling me the truth. I am talking about actual facts. I say your people have not fulfilled their part of the conditions and we can not fulfil ours. There must be a readjustment. This is my proposal so that you may be protected in your houses and lands, and if you want more land you can take it under the same conditions that everyone else has to take it. We think these conditions are reasonable, and we must have the lands held under the conditions of our law, or we can not defend ourselves to the people who say to us that there is one law for the Doukhobors and another for us.

DOUKHOBORS.—If you find it is impossible to satisfy our desire, will it be possible to reserve for the people in Prince Albert lands in the reserve at Yorkton? They want to come to Yorkton. There are three new villages who were told that they would have to hold their land in severalty. They have settled on land in some cases under entry to other people.

Mr. OLIVER.—In making this general settlement I am willing to assist them the same as others and give them fifteen acres apiece, but how do I know that they want to get it?

DOUKHOBORS.—Two delegates from Prince Albert were present when we were sent, and they asked us to ask you if you will be good enough to reserve them land in the Yorkton district.

Mr. OLIVER.—If they had already moved, I would; but they have their houses and cultivation. I think I would be required to treat them the same as you people.

DOUKHOBORS.—They will move.

Mr. OLIVER.—These people have houses and cultivated land, why should they move? We can not very well assume it as a policy of the government to ask them to give up the work they have put in there. They are comfortable, and I can not presume that they want to leave, although they are free to do so.

DOUKHOBORS.—We were asked by delegates of their settlement specially. They say when you are taking land from the Doukhobors as a community we will not remain. We are perfectly willing to leave improved land and go on unimproved. They will leave anyway, and would be glad to get unimproved land instead of improved.

Mr. OLIVER.—I would not want to hinder them, but I do not like to assume that they are going to leave their houses and lands, because it might be made to mean that we are making them do it.

DOUKHOBORS.—They will move and would be much obliged if you will reserve fifteen acres for them.

Mr. OLIVER.—How many are there in Prince Albert?

DOUKHOBORS.—About twelve hundred. We will wire you the exact number.

Mr. OLIVER.—I am not saying that I will allow them to do it. I do not like the idea at all. You may telegraph me how many people there are, and what land they want, that is the sections they want reserved. I do not like the look of it, however, and do not promise anything.

DOUKHOBORS.—In regard to the timber. We have cut lumber for three years under timber permit, but did not take it away, leaving it to become dry. We have put in a drykiln and will dry our lumber in that way in future. The Doukhobors sent in one hundred and twenty applications for timber permits in January. Mr. Peaker promised to issue them. We were sure that we would get the permits and did not want to lose any time, so we began cutting. Mr. Peaker delayed issuing the permits, and he now says in a circular which has been issued: 'You have no land; you

cannot get permits.' We think we should get these permits. All the permits we had for last year were returned to the agent. The lumber we had under those permits was seized. We would like instructions not to bother the Doukhobors when they have permits, and that instructions should be sent to Mr. Peaker to issue timber permits for which he has the one hundred and twenty applications. We are not applying for more timber, but we want those one hundred and twenty permits.

Mr. OLIVER.—I will give instructions to release the seizure of the timber which was cut before this present year, and to issue permits for the one hundred and twenty applications, if they are in accordance with the regulations. There is a great deal of complaint about the waste of timber by the Doukhobors in cutting.

The DOUKHOBORS.—Where the timber was seized by Mr. Seale he said he never saw any lumber mill in Canada which would do as well as we had done in clearing the ground. He said everything was very proper, but where were our permits? He was pretty mad and swore. We said that we did not intend to do wrong. We have official letters from Mr. Speers and Mr. Smith to cut in this township without giving the sections. We hope that you will not have any objection if we put this letter and the circulars, with our petition in the newspapers?

Mr. OLIVER.—No objection whatever.

The DOUKHOBORS.—We like this country and do not want to go elsewhere. We like the country and would like to live here forever. I cannot express to you what great sorrow the Doukhobors have in their hearts now. We do not want to be swept out.

Mr. OLIVER.—I do not want to sweep you out, but you want something and do not want to take it on the conditions offered.

The DOUKHOBORS.—We hope that you will not have any objection to our taking this opportunity to go to see Sir Wilfrid Laurier?

Mr. OLIVER.—None whatever.

PETITION for reserve for Prince Albert villages near Verigin.

ROSTHERN, SASK., March 30, 1907.

Hon. FRANK OLIVER,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa.

DEAR SIR,—We, the Doukhobors living by Saskatchewan river, in all 1,113 persons, men, women and children, are asking you very earnestly to make a decision to reserve land for us, 15 acres to each person, same as you are reserving now to the Doukhobors in Yorkton district.

By the allotment which was recently made to us by Mr. John McDougall, we find that there will be a very small portion of land, as for instance, we have now simply seven, eight or ten homesteads for all the village. And, therefore, we desire to join ourselves to the village of Doukhobors near Yorkton.

There is a large quantity of free land left on account of the fact that each village had thirty or forty homesteads, and now when the land has been cancelled by new allotting, each village has not more than 10 or 15 homesteads.

From the land left free, we desire you to make a reservation for us in one place near Yorkton, and notwithstanding that a large portion of the land by Saskatchewan river is cultivated, we will leave it to the government management.

In this respect, we can assure you very sincerely that it is our intention to cultivate the land as quickly as possible. For this purpose we had a share with York-

ton Doukhobors in the purchasing of 20 ploughing engines. Last year we sent ploughs with horses, and we have already ploughed a large portion of the land. During this winter we have prepared a large quantity of lumber and built a few buildings.

Besides this in Yorkton, in township 28, ranges 31, 32 and 33 west of 1st meridian; township 29, ranges 31, 32 and 33 west 1st, and ranges 1 and 2 west 2nd; township 30, ranges 32 and 33 west 1st, and ranges 1 and 2 west 2nd; township 31, ranges 32 and 33 west 1st, and ranges 1 and 2 west 2nd; township 32, range 32 west 1st, and ranges 1 and 2 west 2nd; after the reservation of 15 acres to each person, there is left a large area of cultivated land unreserved, which will be entered by foreigners, but we already had a large share in the cultivation of these lands, as we live, all Doukhobors, in common. We settled at first so far from Yorkton district on account of the fact that we were unable to get a sufficient quantity of land. Now, when a larger portion of land is left free by the new reservation to the Yorkton Doukhobors, we hope you will decide to reserve this for us, and all lands ploughed by Saskatchewan river we will leave, with thanks, for the use of the government without compensation.

Respectfully submitted, by the delegates authorized by said society.

Your obedient servants,

(Sgd.) E. KONKIN,
F. MARKOFF,
and
S. REIBIN.

PETITION for reserve for Devil's Lake villages near Verigin.

BUCHANAN, SASK., March 30, 1907.

Hon. FRANK OLIVER,
Minister of the Interior,
Ottawa.

DEAR SIR,—We, the Doukhobors living near Devil's Lake, in all 774 persons, men, women and children, are hereby advising you that on the land which has been reserved recently for us, 15 acres to a person, as we suppose that we will be unable altogether to support ourselves. By the reason that winters here are so severe. When we had full homesteads we were able to occupy ourselves by raising of cattle, to mow large quantities of hay, we were able even to winter cattle for other settlers with good profit.

Now, when largest portion of land which we held is taken from us, we are very sorry for coming to such a far country as Canada.

The character of the land near Devil's Lake is very wet. Sloughs and salines.

On the lands reserved to us, 15 acres to a person, there are large portions of wet places, and if we would occupy ourselves with the cultivation only, without raising of cattle, it is very doubtful as we said above, that we could support ourselves. We can warrant that in two or three years we all will become as beggars. Therefore we hurried to secure information, and have found out that in township 28, ranges 31, 32 and 33 west 1st meridian, township 29, ranges 31, 32 and 33 west 1st meridian, and ranges 1 and 2 west of 2nd, township 30, ranges 32 and 33 west of 1st, and ranges 1 and 2 west of 2nd meridian, township 31, ranges 32 and 33 west of 1st, and ranges 1, 2 and 3 west of 2nd meridian, township 32, range 32, west 1st meridian, ranges 1 and 2 west 2nd meridian, in which our Doukhobors use to dwell before and from cancellation of their lands and new reservation 15 acres to a person, there is a large area of free land left which is not so wet as we have; it is quite dry land suitable for agricultural purposes.

We all are asking you very earnestly to allot lands to us there which is free now.

But all lands we have ploughed and all hay meadowed we have cleared in the locality of Devil's Lake we will leave to the full supervision of the government without compensation.

We have another reason, that is we are living in a community and are cultivating lands in common. Last year we had share in purchasing of 20 steam ploughing engines by which all work can be done simply in aforesaid townships.

We fully trust to receive from you such possible satisfaction:

Delegates authorized by said society:

(Sgd.) E. KONKIN, F. MARKOFF and S. REIBIN.

INTERVIEW between the Honourable Frank Oliver, Minister of Interior, and certain representatives of the Doukhobors, on Thursday, April 11, 1907, regarding foregoing petitions; S. Reibin, interpreter.

A deputation of Doukhobors consisting of S. Reibin, Verigin, E. Konkina, Buchanan and F. Markoff, Rosthern, interviewed the Minister of the Interior at his office in the House of Commons, Mr. G. E. McCraney, M.P., being also present.

E. KONKIN.—The Doukhobors express their thanks for the kindness of the government that they have left 15 acres to the person. The land which has been reserved to Doukhobors, 15 acres to a person, as a farm will be very small portion, so the Doukhobors who live at Rosthern and Devil's Lake are sending us here, and we are asking the government very earnestly to permit them to get land in the locality of Kamsack, where after the new reservation there is a large area of free land now. Speaking especially of the Rosthern people, they had their share before in cultivating the lands which as we found are unreserved, which means they are free now, and the Rosthern people have a share in purchasing engines for ploughing purposes and other implements too; so they would like if you would permit them to get their lands in this locality. And the Devil's Lake people desire just the same thing. These people will not establish new villages but they will be distributed through the villages which have been already established. The reason they are moving, we think it would be more convenient to us to have a larger block of land where we easier would be able to support ourselves.

MR. OLIVER.—When these two gentlemen were here before they made the same proposition to me. I said I would consider the matter and discuss it, and I have done so. I am not able to change the opinion I gave them then. What the government is doing with the land of the country is to give it in blocks of 160 acres each to people who want to live on it and cultivate it. The government always expected that although the Doukhobors did not do this when they came to the country first they would, when they got well enough off, take their land in that way. After so many years the Doukhobors have not taken their land in that way. They have said that they wish to live together in villages and cultivate their land in common and hold their property in common. The government has no law by which it is able to deal with them in that way. At the same time the government does not wish to interfere with them either in their religious beliefs or in their way of living, or in their way of holding property, and so the government is quite willing to preserve to the Doukhobors the land that they occupy with their villages and the land which they cultivate as their farms; not to ask them to change their way of living, not to ask them to take any oath of allegiance or, of anything else. The government is willing to leave them just as it finds them at the end of seven years that they have been in Canada. But having done that it must then go on and deal with the land which is not occupied and cultivated

by the Doukhobors as it must deal with all other land in the country and with all other people. The government does not attempt to interfere with the Doukhobors in moving from one place to another or following their mode of life after they have removed. That is not a matter that the government wishes to interfere with, but when the Doukhobors ask the government to assist them in making such removal from one place to another, and to take part with them in changing their places of living, and to provide for them in one place what they see fit to throw away in another the government has no authority or right to do that and they should not ask the government to do it. The land that is not occupied with houses or cultivation by the Doukhobors has been cancelled from the names which appear in the books of the land office against it, but until the 1st of May it is open to free entry by Doukhobors only, so that until the 1st of May the Doukhobors living anywhere in any of the villages may enter for any of the land that has been cancelled that they wish to enter for. But having entered for it in that way they can only hold it by complying with the same conditions as other settlers, by living upon it and cultivating it for their own use. That is to say, the people in the Prince Albert district may if they wish leave their villages there and go to the Yorkton district and take homesteads in the Yorkton district, but after they have taken these homesteads in the Yorkton district they must hold them by residence and cultivation the same as other people. The same applies to the people of the Devil's Lake district. If they wish they may take homesteads near Veregin, but if they take them there they must take them on the same condition as other homesteaders. There is no provision in our law for the taking of lands or the holding of lands in community as the Doukhobors desire to take and hold their lands. We have only one law. It applies to all people, and I have no right or authority to change that law for any part of the people. But in this country we always respect a vested right. That is to say, a right that exists. We do not question so much how the man got it, but if he has it we respect it. So finding the Doukhobors in their villages holding their lands in community we respect their rights so far as that goes. We do that outside of the law, but we cannot make a new law for the future that would make a difference between the Doukhobors and the other people of the country.

Mr. KONKIN.—We are very sorry that the government has refused to fulfil the desire of the Rosthern and Devil's Lake people, but it is stated in our letters that they have shares in agricultural implements and many other things, so they will move away to the Yorkton district, and of course we cannot compel the government to reserve land for them, but at the same time we can express our very deep sorrow that the government has refused, that Mr. Oliver said that it appears to him that the Doukhobors should not ask the government to permit them to move, so we are surprised and do not know whom we should ask if we should not ask the government.

Mr. OLIVER.—I think that my friend has misunderstood the meaning of what I said when I said the Doukhobors should not ask us to permit them to move as a community from Prince Albert to Yorkton. The meaning of that is that they should not ask us to break the law, which only provides for holding of land by persons for their own use, which makes no provision for holding of land by a community. I have already told them that they may move if they wish, but they were asking me to give them privileges that the law does not permit me to give, that is to say, they were asking me to break the law.

Mr. KONKIN.—We did not ask Mr. Oliver to change any laws, but what we asked is this, that instead that they have reserved 15 acres to the person at Rosthern district, we ask them to allow these people to have the same portion of land which they have reserved already in Yorkton district, so we see no way by which he would break more law. We consider that if you give the Rosthern Doukhobors 15 acres of land each at Yorkton you would not be breaking the law more than by giving them 15 acres of land each at Rosthern.

Mr. OLIVER.—The answer to that is that they have what we call in English a vested right. At least we are willing to concede or allow that they have a vested right in the lands that they are cultivating and occupying at Rosthern, but they have not any vested right in the lands that they ask at Yorkton, and it is this vested right which

under English custom is above the law; that is why we are willing to give you what you have, but are not willing to give you something that you have not.

Mr. REBIN.—Markoff represents Rosthern colony and Konkin Devil's Lake, and the people who live there told them that they will really move to the district of Yorkton for the reasons that they have share in so many things, especially the Devil's Lake people. They have share in all the ploughs and engines, and they cannot do any work at Devil's Lake on account of the places are so wet and unfeasible for the engines. The government will make no objection to their moving.

Mr. OLIVER.—The government will make no objection to their moving, but the government will be very sorry for the Doukhobors to leave the houses and improvements that they have made.

Mr. REBIN.—The share which they have in Yorkton district is worth much more than the cultivation and improvements they have at Rosthern, and if the government has a pity to them we see no reason why they are objecting to reserving them 15 acres in Yorkton district. Before the Doukhobors came to Canada the government of this country knew very distinctly the Doukhobors had desire to live in villages and to cultivate all their lands in common, and the government agreed to it, and they hold the original letters from government officials to this effect, and we are surprised why government was expecting that Doukhobors will live individually after they have been informed that they will exist in common, and if Doukhobors had known the conditions which they are proposing to them now, they would not have come at all.

Mr. OLIVER.—I have never seen nor do I know of any such agreement or any such papers. I do not think that any such exist. There was a provision in the law at the time the Doukhobors came to Canada which allowed people to live in villages, but it did not permit them to cultivate their land or did not expect them to hold their property in common. It was supposed by the people of Canada who heard anything about the Doukhobors that their ideas were the same as those of the Mennonites, who also came from Russia, and who also lived in villages, but the Mennonites, although they live in villages and the Canadian law was made probably to permit them to live in villages, they cultivated their land in severalty, and they held their property in severalty. I am certain that the people of Canada never supposed that the Doukhobors intended to cultivate in common, or to hold property in common any more than the Mennonites. The Mennonites came under the same guarantee as respects bearing arms. There have been people in Canada, ever since the country was a country, who had these beliefs and their beliefs have always been respected. So there was no different law made for the Doukhobors in the case of their not bearing arms or in the case of their living in villages than was for every one.

Mr. KONKIN.—So far as we know, all conditions which were promised by the government to the Doukhobors are changed altogether. We have a letter from the Minister of the Interior written to the Doukhobors in which he explained the conditions under which the Doukhobors have been accepted in Canada. In this letter he explained very clearly the Doukhobors may live in villages if they desire, and instead of cultivating each homestead separately, they can do it in one large block near the village.

Mr. OLIVER.—The letter of Mr. Sifton was written long after the Doukhobors came to Canada, and therefore was not a promise to them before their coming as to what the conditions of their holding of land would be. It is true that Mr. Sifton promised a deputation of Doukhobors that they would be allowed to live in villages and cultivate their lands in common, provided they made entry for their lands individually. Mr. Sifton did not promise that the people who made entry for their lands individually would be granted their patents because of cultivation in common. Mr. Sifton's letter was written for the purpose of making it easy for the people to get started in the cultivation of land, and in their providing a living for themselves. The very letter and the purpose of the letter was to get them to make entry for their land, and every man in making that entry declared that he was making the entry on that land for his own use and benefit. Since that time the large majority of the Doukhobors have absolutely violated the declaration that they made at that time, which

certainly Mr. Sifton did not expect, and which certainly the people of Canada did not expect. And when the Doukhobors have broken the promise that they made when they made their entries, it is not for them to claim that a promise made to them conditional upon their fulfilling their part has been broken to them.

Mr. KONKIN.—It is true the Doukhobors made their homestead entries individually believing as they were assured by government officials, that in doing that they would simply fulfil the form, but they would never be asked to cultivate their land individually and live separately, and they were assured that they will have the privilege to live in villages and cultivate their land in common, as said in letter of Mr. Sifton.

Mr. OLIVER.—They are being permitted to live in villages, and they are being permitted to cultivate their land in common, but they are not being permitted to hold land contrary to the provisions of the law of Canada which provides for all the people of Canada, and which neither Mr. Sifton nor myself could change, and which Mr. Sifton did not attempt to change.

Mr. KONKIN.—We would like to know, Mr. Oliver, that after the government has cancelled all the lands of the Doukhobors without their consent, we think it would be right to them to refund the money which has been paid for this land. I do not mean the land which we have reserved, but the land which is now out of our control.

Mr. OLIVER.—I am willing to consider it, but I am not able to answer it at the moment, because I have control of the land but not control of the money. Once the money is paid in it goes to the Minister of Finance, and it may be possible to get it back and it may not. For my own part I am quite willing to pay it back, and will use reasonable means to try to get it, but cannot promise it at present. The law is that when a man makes entry and his entry is cancelled he does not get the money back.

Mr. KONKIN.—That would be a good way for the government to make money, to grant 2,000 homesteads and then cancel them and keep the money and grant them to someone else.

Mr. OLIVER.—That is what we do when we take a man's entry, we agree to give him the land if he does certain things, and if he does not do certain things we cancel his entry and he loses his money. But in this case I am willing for my own part to suppose that you did not understand all the facts in regard to the law, and I would not wish you to think that we were doing you a wrong, although we would only be carrying out the law as it is. I cannot take any special notice of what you say the people at Prince Albert and Buchanan intend to do. So far as I know they are there, and so far as I know they are going to stay there, but you, of course, will understand that if they move away then those reserves which we have made will have to come back into the public lands.

Mr. REIBIN.—We are much obliged to you for all the time you have taken with us, and we would be glad if you would let us have answers to the letters we brought with us, and if you will let us have the answers we will call for them.

Mr. OLIVER.—I will let you have a copy of this report to-day, but have not time to write a letter in answer to the ones which you have brought with you. I will do so later and send it to you, to be addressed to S. Reibin, Veregin.

OTTAWA, April 25, 1907.

To Messrs. E. Konkin, F. Markoff and S. Reibin, speaking for the Doukhobors living by the Saskatchewan river, by letter, dated March 30, 1907.

DEAR SIRs,—I have read your letter of March 30 carefully, and have in mind the conversation held with yourselves on this subject. In reply to your request to allot land in the Yorkton land district to the 1,113 Doukhobors now living in the Prince Albert district, I beg to say that I have no authority under the law of Canada to make such allotment, and therefore cannot accede to your request.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) FRANK OLIVER.

S. REIBIN, Esq.,
Veregin, Sask.

OTTAWA, April 25, 1907.

To Messrs. E. Konkin, F. Markoff and S. Reibin, speaking for the Doukhobors living near Devil's Lake, by letter dated March 30, 1907.

DEAR SIRs,—I have read your letter of march 30 carefully, and have in mind the discussion held with yourselves dealing with the same subject. In reply to your request contained in the letter that you be allotted lands in the townships near Veregin, I beg to say that I have no authority under the laws of Canada to make such allotment as you ask for.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) F. OLIVER.

S. REIBIN, Esq.,
Veregin, Sask.

FINAL REPORT OF COMMISSIONER.

OTTAWA, May 14, 1907.

The Hon. FRANK OLIVER,
Minister of the Interior.

SIR,—Pursuant to your instructions *re* settlement of the Doukhobor land question, this commission reassembled at Langham, Saskatchewan, early in January of this year and began the work of its second itinerary. As you are aware the purpose and labour of the first itinerary had been that of investigation and the seeking of some method whereby these complex questions affecting the Doukhobor lands in Canada might be solved in the interests of all concerned. Your government having determined upon a method, the purpose of the second itinerary was that of investigation and explanation to the Doukhobor peoples both communistic and independent. To make this notification and explanation perfectly clear to the minds of these people an official document had been prepared by yourself which fully set forth the purpose and plan and full determination of the government concerning these lands and the Doukhobors who hitherto had held entries on same.

This official document was translated by Professor Sherbenin into the language of the people, and several hundred copies were printed with the English and Russian side by side. Thus in the visits made to the villages of the Doukhobors your commission not only through the official interpreter, made explanation and gave full notice, but also left in the hands of the people duplicate copies of the official document covering the whole case, as it had been determined upon in action by your government. Thus early in January this commission travelled from village to village, and within less than one month's time by persistent and energetic action, all the Doukhobor people resident in their sixty-one villages, situated as they are hundreds of miles apart in the upper and lower Saskatchewan, were fully notified, and all questions appertaining to the land and the purpose of the government had been explained to them, and also the official document of notification and explanation had been put in their hands, and in every case these people were informed that having finished the first itinerary, this commission would in due course return to them, and this time the commission would be equipped as a sub-agency of the Dominion Lands, and also be prepared to accept applications for naturalization, having full authority to take entries and give re-entries on these lands affected, even as the visit of notification and the official document had fully explained to the people.

Moreover, during this second itinerary your commission invariably notified the Doukhobors that they might consider that all homestead entries on which the law of Canada had not been complied with were now cancelled and at the close of this second itinerary your commission recommended that two thousand five hundred and three entries be thus cancelled.

The work of the second itinerary being accomplished in due course and without losing any time, your commission convened at the starting point and began its third itinerary. This was a work of patience and steady and continuous labour on the part of each member of the commission and staff. However, the people seemed to have been fully prepared by the previous visit, and had in most part determined upon their course of action. Entering a village and securing quarters therein and opening an office, your commission assembled the people in their representatives and put the question to them straight, 'Well, what have you determined on? Are you going to become Canadian citizens and make re-entry for these homesteads, or have you elected to remain even as you have continued during the years of your sojourn in Canada?' Thus having learned from the people themselves what they purposed to do, your commission proceeded to act accordingly. In the case of those who remained in community, your commission created reserves on the basis of fifteen acres per soul of population.

The communistic people of the Upper Saskatchewan, situated in what is known as the Prince Albert Dominion Lands District, to a man said, 'We do not want any reserve land in this part of the country.' In this declaration they were supported by the eight colonies situated two hundred miles farther east in the vicinity of the town of Buchanan in the Yorkton Dominion Lands Agency. In every case your commission answered the people who thus desired the fifteen acre reserve in some compact block near Veregin station or in the Kamsack country, by stating to them that its instructions were to lay out reserves contiguous to the villages we might find the people dwelling in. This was done so far as the community people were concerned in every case but one, which was that of a few people being a remnant of a village which had already migrated into the Yorkton district the summer previous. These few people were allowed to follow their friends and provision was made for them in the Yorkton district. These numbered in total thirty-one souls. As to all the rest reserve provision was made for them in each vicinity where your commission found them living. With the exception of the above groups, Prince Albert and Devil's Lake, the balance of the people took part in the creation of the reserves, and expressed satisfaction and in some cases profound gratitude for the action of the government and the manner of its being carried out by your commission. In no case were their village occupancies disturbed by this commission except on the urgent request of the community, which in one or two instances desired to change the site of their villages.

Paralleling this dealing with the community people, your commission went on with its work of taking up the cases of individuals who either, previously or at the time of our third visit declared themselves as independent and thus manifested their desire to apply for citizenship in Canada, and re-entry on homesteads. Proceeding in this way and dealing with each class in community or individually, your commission traveled over all the districts affected, visited all the villages, sixty-one in number, created that many reserves, and dealt with all the Doukhobors, whether communistic or independent, who were found in the country at this time.

In the accomplishment of this work, your commission provided reserves for 8,175 communistic Doukhobors, making use of for these reserves 768 quarter sections, or in other words, 122,880 acres of land. Further, your commission gave independent Doukhobors 235 entries; among these were allowed seventy exchanges, this latter entailing the taking abandonments from the parties interested. Your commission also took 270 applications for naturalization, and then, having satisfied the Doukhobors, both independent and communistic, upon the question of land as per the policy determined upon by your government, we found that we had available for settlement and at the disposition of your government 1,618 homesteads, or 258,880 acres of land.

The above in brief is a history of the work of your commission in carrying out its instructions. This work entailed considerable hardship; as you are aware, the winter was abnormal, and during two months of this continuous travel the weather was extreme. The condition of the roads made progress difficult; nevertheless, we are grateful to record that we broke no engagements, were on time at each point, and never lost a day in the course of both itineraries.

In closing this report, your commissioner desires to place on record his very warm appreciation of those who were from the beginning associated with him in this mission. In the first place, Mr. S. Maber, of your department, came equipped with experience and expert knowledge on all questions bearing on homestead law. In connection with this, he gave himself to the work with great industry, and we are in duty bound to say that the correctness of our lists, and the careful checking up of all these complex questions, as it concerned Dominion Land offices and the head office in your department, is to a very large extent to be credited to Mr. Maber's painstaking and faithful attention to duty. Then, this commission was most favoured in securing the services of Mr. Michael White, of Langham, Saskatchewan, as its official interpreter. Mr. White not only acted most faithfully as interpreter, but gave constant and valuable assistance to the commission in the capacity of clerk. Indeed your commissioner cannot speak too highly of the conduct and services of these members of his staff. Our association from start to finish has been of the kindest, and each one worked not only in harmony but with a will consistent to the end and object in view.

Trusting that subsequent events will prove that in the handling of this intricate matter, your department and the commission entrusted with the carrying out of its policy, may have no cause for regret, I am,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) JOHN McDUGALL.